

Award Winning Retirement Housing ~ Numerous Sites English Courtyard Association, National

“Ruth is always very thorough in her review and understanding of each site; taking a ‘hands on’ approach to managing vegetation to ensure that existing features are retained to deliver very attractive, mature, well considered gardens and courtyard schemes, that take account of the specific needs of the elderly.”

Victor Kidd, Director, English Courtyard Association.



Courtyard Pergola.

Project Description

Ruth Elwood worked with English Courtyard Association (until their demise) & their architect's, Sidell Gibson Partnership, for almost 15 years, during previous employment & since setting up ELD in 1999. The original concept for ECA developments was based on the traditional courtyard plan of almshouses, with the relationship of the buildings to the space around them of great importance. Ruth has worked on 12 out of 36 'What House' award winning sites across the country, to provide outstanding courtyard designs from inception to completion.

Project Requirements

Responsibilities for the many sites included site appraisals, landscape & visual impact assessments; concept design; detailed planting design; Japanese Knotweed eradication; tree surveys; all detailed landscape drawings; presentation plans & landscape management plans to obtain planning approval for often complex sites, comprising high specification, retirement housing developments.

Many ECA developments were located within areas of green belt, attractive, designated landscapes or had trees to be preserved by TPOs. ELD regularly had additional planning policy requirements to fulfil as part of satisfying conditions to obtain planning approval for sites at: Christ's Hospital Phase 2, Shottery Hall, Storrington, Dunchurch Hall Phase 2, Elton, Marlborough & Althorpe.

Christ's Hospital, Horsham, West Sussex

The Phase 1 area of English Courtyard's Bluecoat Pond development at Christ's Hospital, pictured below left, won the 'What House', Best Landscape Award, during Ruth's period of previous employment. Phase 2 of the development, pictured below left, was designed by ELD & completed in 2004. The larger image left, illustrates a typical English Courtyard scheme, with mature plants & highly floristic, mixed borders that provide year round interest for residents, with courtyard features of interest.

Project Particulars

Client: English Courtyard Association
Architects: Sidell Gibson Partnership
Capital Value: £2 million per site



Christ's Hospital, Phase 2.



Threshold Planting at Dunchurch Hall.



Pond Jetty at Christ's Hospital, Phase 1.



Detailed "Fairy Garden" Concept for the Storrington Site.